



Background:

There is an ongoing opioid overdose crisis in the U.S., and the growth in opioid-involved overdose deaths among Blacks outpaces that of Whites in Indianapolis and across the nation. To address this issue and reduce overdose deaths in Black communities in Indianapolis, the Trustees of Indiana University successfully applied for and were awarded a federal grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to conduct the MACRO-B / S.O.U.L. Project over the next 3 years (2022-2025).

Project Goals:

Using a community-engaged approach, this project aims to develop and implement new policies and practices to remove structural racism around overdose prevention and response. The ultimate objective is to achieve a >25% decrease in opioid-involved overdose deaths in the target community, encompassing four zip code areas (46202, 46205, 46208, & 46218) in Indianapolis, Indiana.

Purpose:

The MACRO-B / S.O.U.L. project focuses on gathering information about the neighborhood conditions, policies, and practices contributing to a higher rate of overdose deaths in Black/African Americans compared to White individuals in the specified zip codes. By understanding these factors, the project seeks to create effective solutions to prevent overdoses and overdose deaths in the Black community.

Project Team:

The MACRO-B / S.O.U.L. project is led by representatives from various sectors, including the Indiana University School of Public Health and Overdose Lifeline. Funding is provided by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Research Process:

We have conducted individual interviews, focus groups, and community training sessions with Indianapolis Black residents. The upcoming event, "Community in Crisis," scheduled for August 17th (Saturday, 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM), will serve as a town hall meeting. The event will feature keynote speakers, panelists comprising community leaders, policy makers, law enforcement officials, representatives from recovery organizations, and government officials at the local, state, and federal levels. The primary focus of the event will be to gather community input regarding neighborhood conditions, policies, and practices contributing to higher overdose death rates among Black/African Americans.